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THE HEART OF LIFE

By

James Buckham

IN MEMORIAM  
GEORGE HOLMES HOWISON



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Mrs. Harrison  
Cousin friend  
of John Wright Buckham  
Berkeley,  
November, 1903.







OATEN STOP SERIES  
VI



# THE HEART OF LIFE

BY JAMES BVCKHAM



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TO MY WIFE  
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# THE HEART OF LIFE



## THE HEART OF LIFE



### OUT OF THE CITY

OUT of the city, how blue the sky  
And dreamy-deep, like a maiden's eye !

Springs the grass with its vivid green ;  
Darts the wing with its April sheen ;

Purls the brook o'er its pebbled bed ;  
Nods the flow'r with its spotless head.

Out of the city, how the breeze  
Lips and laughs in the tossing trees,

Cools its wings in the crystal lake,  
Borrows odor of bloom and brake !

Out of the city's smoke and soot  
Hasten pilgrims on wing and foot ;

Little birds from the parks and towers,  
Lads and lasses to gather flowers.

Where's the heart that can answer nay  
To the whispered "Come !" of an April  
day ?

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Oh, the longing of nature born,  
To brush the dew and to breathe the morn,  
To plunge the lips in some gliding brook,  
And lie full length in a sunny nook !

Happy he of the childlike heart,  
Whom nature wins with her artless art ;

Who fain of the woodland folk would be,  
And speak the language of brook and tree.

## OLD-TIME DAYS

**I** CAN see the river gliding, as it used to  
long ago,  
Round the shoulder of the meadow where  
the thick-set willows grow.  
I can hear it purl and ripple, in a gentle  
lullaby,  
To a little barefoot dreamer gazing up into  
the sky.

Yonder lie the brown old farm-house,  
crown'd with chimney huge and square,  
And the barn beloved of swallows, with its  
weathercock in air.

## OLD-TIME DAYS

I can hear the river-music blend with cow-bells from the hill,  
And the far-off clang and rumble of the log-frame in the mill.

How I loved to lie a-dreaming in the deep and quiet grass,  
While I watched the ghosts of noonday through the fields of heaven pass !  
I was happy — oh, so happy ! — while the purling of the stream  
Seemed to weave a little poem for the music of my dream !

Oh, to taste once more the pleasure that I knew in years gone by,  
When my heart was full of sunshine as the summer morning sky !  
Oh, to feel that out-door gladness when the days were fresh and long,  
And the bluebird climbed to heaven on the ladder of his song !

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### THE MUSIC OF THE HOUNDS

**O** HARK ! how it swells on the clear  
morning air,  
When the world is all white with the frost  
and the snow,  
And away o'er the hills flies the fox or the  
hare,  
While shoulder to shoulder the streaming  
dogs go,  
All hot on the scent, with their wrinkled  
necks bent,  
And their dewlaps a-swing, and their ears  
sweeping low.

Now lost in the hollow, now loud on the  
hill ;  
Now sweeping, like faint chime of bells,  
through the pines ;  
Now veering, and nearing, and sending a  
thrill  
To the heart of the hunter, who watchful  
reclines,  
With rifle held low, and with elbow in snow,  
By the broken stone wall with its tangle of  
vines.

## THE MUSIC OF THE HOUNDS

A shot, and a shout ! But the quarry swings  
    'round.

Mark yon ! Like the wind it is climbing  
    the slope,

And the hounds, hot and baffled, are nosing  
    the ground,

And crying lost scent, like a soul without  
    hope.

But hear that wild strain ! They have found  
    it again,

And all in a bunch up the hillside they lope.

Away and away goes the music divine,

As clear as a bugle, as sweet as a flute.

It leaps in my blood like the madness of  
    wine,

It rouses my soul with the rage of pursuit.

O hounds in full tongue ! How the stale  
    world grows young

With the primitive passion that throbs in the  
    brute !

Then ho ! for the field when December  
    draws on,

And twigs of the wildwood are silvered with  
    frost.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Slip leash from old Bugler, and Trailer, and  
Don,  
And loose the hot pack where the quarry  
has crost.  
A blue winter sky, with the hounds in full  
cry, —  
They've found the wild pipes that the  
shepherd-god lost !

## THE SONG IN THE STORM

**I**T rains, but on a dripping bough  
A little bird sings clear and sweet, —  
I think he knows not why nor how,  
Except that with his slender feet  
He feels dear nature's pulses beat.

The wind up-rising stirs the tree,  
And fast with silver tears it weeps ;  
The little bird more cheerily  
Pipes with his tender throat, and keeps  
His faith in sunshine, tho' it sleeps !

There swings his pretty nest below ;  
His mate sits listening to his song.  
'Tis love that makes her bosom glow,

## GOOD-NIGHT TO THE WORLD

'Tis love that whispers, all day long,  
"Sleep, sleep, my nestlings, and grow  
strong !"

Ah, dreary sky, and dripping tree,  
And wind that sobbest in the wood,  
Know well, if anywhere love be,  
She hath the sunshine in her hood ;  
For everything to love is good !

## GOOD-NIGHT TO THE WORLD

**T**HE brook is unharnessed, and sleeps by  
the mill,  
The curtains are drawn, and the village is  
still,  
The last star is lit, and the whip-poor-wills  
call  
Good-night to the world, and may God  
bless you all !

*Nine* strikes the old clock at the head of  
the stair.

I put off my clothes, and I put by my care.  
The air is so fragrant, the couch is so white,—  
Sweet world, let us slumber ; God send you  
good-night !

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### SUMMER RAIN

**A** SLANT, the driven rain incessant  
streams ;  
The thirsty meadows sigh with soft delight ;  
The wind-blown poplar shifts from green to  
white,  
And white to green, as aimlessly as dreams.  
Down leaps the torrent from the gurgling  
spout,  
And plunges, foam-white, in the cask. The  
roof  
Resounds with hasty drops, like hoof on  
hoof  
Of elfin horsemen — a wild, cantering rout !  
The windows stream and blur the world with  
mist.  
Gray Night comes creeping early from the  
hills,  
Pallid and tearful, like a child unkissed,  
That broods upon its little wrongs and ills.

### THE MORNING WIND

**H**OW it smells of the world made new,  
Ferny glades that are gemmed with dew,  
Meadow-soil where the grass stands high,

## THE MORNING WIND

Flow'rs that lift to the sun and sky  
Cups of crimson, and white, and blue,  
Brimming-sweet as the wind goes by !

How it murmurs among the trees,  
Full of peace as the hum of bees !  
How it ripples the wayside pool,  
Billows the lance-grass thin and cool ;  
Rocks the swan at his silver ease,  
Sailing free, without chart or rule !

How it steals from the sunrise-land,  
Soft of touch as a mother's hand ;  
Soothing the fevered brow and brain,  
Robbed of slumber by toil or pain ;  
Sweet as dew to the desert sand,  
Grateful as show'rs of summer rain !

Heart of the Father, deep and kind,  
Breathing forth in the morning wind,  
Can I question thy love, and still  
Taste the air on the sunrise-hill ?  
Nay ! in the very breeze I find  
Throb of love like a pulse's thrill.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### AUGUST TWILIGHT

**W**ITH downward-pointing horns the  
ghostly moon,  
Omen of drought, hangs midway of the  
west.

The hidden locust shrills his ancient tune  
Of dying summer, and the cricket's din  
Sounds colder, as if frost had touched his  
breast,  
And strained to sharps his little violin.

From tree to tree the katydid disputes,  
And the shrill-sounding locusts rasp their  
wings,  
And tree-toads with their hesitant soft flutes,  
Piping low queries, list, and pipe again.  
The frost-fear trembles in all creature things,  
And every voice seems prophecy of pain !

### WHERE THE DAY BEGINS

**W**HERE does the day begin — where  
may it be ?

Not on the mountain-tops, not on the sea ;  
Somewhere beyond them, somewhere before  
them,

## A FLOWER

Shines the sweet light, ere the morning breaks  
o'er them.

Peak that art highest, island that liest  
Farthest away in the purple-rimmed sea,  
Where does the day begin, — where may it  
be ?

Out of the bosom of God comes the day, —  
Flood of his tenderness nothing can stay ;  
Love that up-springing sets the world sing-  
ing,  
Steeple a-shine and the silver bells ringing.  
Infinite motion of infinite ocean,  
Light but the symbol that broadens for aye,  
Out of the bosom of God comes the day !

## A FLOWER

**H**OW beautiful is a flower !  
It is like the soul of a child  
Set free and growing wild  
In the sunshine and the shower.

So fragrant, so fair, so true !  
Of the spirit's texture spun,  
It smiles with the smiling sun,  
And it weeps with the weeping dew.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

God loves it — and why not we ?  
'Tis a face with a soul a-shine,  
'Tis a thought of the mind Divine,  
'Tis a hint of the life to be.

### BO-PEEP

**L**ITTLE Bo-peep ! ah, where away  
Leads she her sheep, this summer  
day ?

Somewhere the shy little maid must be —  
She's so nut-brown real to you and to me !

### THE SQUIRREL'S ROAD

**I**T zigzags through the pastures brown,  
And climbs old Pine Hill to its crown,  
With many a broken stake and rail,  
And gaps where beds of ivy trail.  
In hollows of its mossy top  
The pine-cone and the acorn drop ;  
While, here and there, aloft is seen  
A timid, waving plume of green,  
Where some shy seed has taken hold  
With slender roots in moss and mold.

## THE SQUIRREL'S ROAD

The squirrel, on his frequent trips  
With corn and mast between his lips,  
Glides in and out from rail to rail,  
With ears erect and flashing tail.  
Sometimes he stops, his spoil laid by,  
To frisk and chatter merrily,  
Or wash his little elfin face,  
With many a flirt and queer grimace.  
Anon he scolds a passing crow,  
Jerking his pert tail to and fro,  
Or scurries like a frightened thief  
At shadow of a falling leaf.  
All day along his fence-top road  
He bears his harvest, load by load ;  
The acorn with its little hat ;  
The butternut, egg-shaped and fat ;  
The farmer's corn from shock and wain ;  
Cheek-pouches-full of mealy grain ;  
Three-cornered beechnuts, thin of shell ;  
The chestnut, burred and armored well ;  
And walnuts, with their tight green coats  
Close buttoned round their slender throats.

A busy little workman he,  
Who loves his task, yet labors free,  
Stops, when he wills, to frisk and bark,  
And never drudges after dark !

## THE HEART OF LIFE

I love to hear his chirring cry,  
When rosy sunrise stains the sky,  
And see him flashing to his toil,  
While frost like snow encrusts the soil.  
With tail above his back, he sails  
Along the angles of the rails,  
Content to gain two rods in three,  
And have sure highway from his tree.

Dear is the old-time squirrel-way,  
With mosses green and lichens gray, —  
The straggling fence, that girds the hill,  
And wanders through the pine woods still.  
I loved it in my boyhood time,  
I love it in my manhood's prime.  
Would in the corn-field I could lie,  
And watch the squirrels zigzag by !

## IN WINTER TWILIGHT

**B**ITTER and bleak is the closing day.  
The wind goes wailing, the sky is gray,  
And there's never a bird on bough or spray.  
Alas, how dreary !

But summer will surely come again.  
The earth needs snow, and cold, and rain,  
Just as our hearts need grief and pain.  
And so be cheery !

## UP GARRET

### UP GARRET

**W**HAT a world of fun we had,  
You a lass and I a lad,  
Up garret !

In the sweet mysterious dusk,  
Redolent of mint and musk,  
With the herbs strung overhead,  
And the "peppers" stiff and red,  
And, half-hid by dangling corn,  
Grandpa's flask and powder-horn !

Such a store of treasures rare  
We were sure of finding there,  
Up garret !

Hats and coats of pattern quaint ;  
Dark old paintings blurred and faint ;  
Spinning-wheels, whose gossip-whir  
Might have startled Aaron Burr ;  
Old lace caps of saffron hue ;  
Dishes splashed with villas blue.

You in trailing silk were dressed,  
I wore grandpa's figured vest,  
Up garret.

So we stood up, hushed and grand,  
And were married, hand in hand,

## THE HEART OF LIFE

While the tall-cased clock beheld,  
As it doubtless did of eld,  
When at great-grandfather's side  
Stood his blushing Quaker bride.

Furnished ready to our hand  
Was the cozy home we planned,  
Up garret.  
Chairs that any modern belle  
Would pronounce "antique and swell ;"  
Chests and dressers that would vie  
With the grandest you could buy.  
Ah ! they didn't know it then,  
Save the little maids and men.

All day long in childish wise  
We spun out life's mysteries,  
Up garret,  
In the fragrant, spicy gloom  
Of that dear old raftered room.  
Oh, that life in very truth  
Were but sweet, protracted youth,  
And we all might play our parts  
With unwearied, happy hearts !

## THE HAPPY BROOK

### THE HAPPY BROOK

**S**PARKLING down the hillside, clear  
and cool and sweet,  
Singing in the shadows where the branches  
meet,  
Laughing, dancing, whirling, in each pebbly  
nook,  
What a merry fellow is the mountain  
brook !

What a helpful spirit in his cheery tones !  
How he makes sweet music out of fretful  
stones !  
Be it morn or midnight, be it dark or bright,  
Still his song is ever of his heart's delight.

Thou, who growest doubtful of the great  
world's good,  
Seek this little preacher in the leafy wood ;  
Catch his cheerful spirit, learn his merry  
song ;  
So shalt thou be happy as the day is long.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### RAIN IN THE WOODS

SILENCE first, with gloom o'erhead ;  
Not a stir in bush or tree ;  
Woodfolk all to coverts fled ;  
Dumb the gossip chickadee.

Then a little rustling sigh ;  
Treetops toss, and bushes shake,  
And a silent wave goes by  
In the feathered fern and brake.

Now a murmur, growing loud  
In the pine tops far and near ;  
And the woods are tossed and bowed,  
Like a soul in sudden fear.

Hark ! the music of the rain  
On a thousand leaky roofs,  
Like an army o'er a plain  
Gallopings with silver hoofs !

Patter, patter, on the ground,  
Rustle, rustle in the trees ;  
And the beaded bushes round  
Drip when shaken by the breeze.

## BEGINNINGS

Ah ! if you would nature know  
Close and true in all her moods,  
Flee not from the show'r, but go  
Hear the raindrops in the woods !

## BEGINNINGS

**O** MIGHTY, mighty river, flowing  
down so deep and calm,  
With the mills upon thy fingers, and the  
ships upon thy palm !

Tell me why thou never failest, never grow-  
est weak and small,  
But with ever-swelling current bringest down  
thy wealth to all ?

Quickly then the river answered : " Praise  
the little mountain spring,  
Ever sparkling, ever gushing, for the precious  
gifts I bring.

" Far away among the forests, where the  
moss lies deep and cool,  
There the mill hums in a crevice, and the  
ship swims in a pool ! "

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### THE ROSE IN THE WALL

A MOSS-GROWN wall of a ruined  
house,  
Deep in tangle of weed and thorn,  
Undermined by the mole and mouse, —  
Creviced crib for the squirrel's corn.

In the wall, like a patch of sun,  
Disk of a wild rose blooming bright ;  
Petals soft as a baby's cheek,  
Sweet as love when its doubt is done ;  
Heart of it seeming to burn and speak,  
Running over with first delight.  
See how it nods in the summer wind,  
Turns its face to the north and south,  
Kissing all with its little mouth,  
All so sweet to its own sweet mind !  
See how it dips to the earth and sky,  
Loving both, though it scarce knows why !

Fresh young flower in the ruin's heart,  
New-born child in the arms of age,  
Nature's hint of a truth thou art, —  
Poem writ on a wayside page.  
Ever and ever, as long as love  
Spins the wheel of the rolling world,

## BAREFOOTHOOD

Out of the bosom of age and death,  
Bud and blossom and leaf uncurled,  
Child of the earth and the sun above,  
Life shall bloom like a dewy flower,  
Fresh fore'er in the Father's bower.  
Ever and ever, as long as God  
Bringeth good out of pain and loss,  
In the mold of the leaf-strewn sod,  
In the wall that is dank with moss, —  
Perished hopes that we fain would hide, —  
Sweetly still shall the wild rose bide.  
Ah ! the promise will sure befall.  
Some time, over the ruined wall,  
Over decay, and death, and all  
Hopes and dreams that have failed and died,  
When the wind of his purpose blows,  
God shall waken a sweet new rose !

## / BAREFOOTHOOD

**H**OW the mornings used to rise  
Just like music in the skies !  
How the first breath of the day  
Smelled like paradise in May,  
And you couldn't stay in bed  
For the bird-songs overhead !  
Ah ! how sweet life was and good,  
In the days of Barefootness !

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Not a trouble nor a care  
In the whole world anywhere !  
Just as light and gay and free  
As a bird that tops a tree ;  
Just as pure from wilful wrong ;  
Just as full of grateful song.  
Not a warbler in the wood  
Praises God like Barefoothood !

Simple joys, and yet how sweet ! —  
Just the pools that laved your feet ;  
Just the mud between your toes ;  
Just the wild fruit where it grows ;  
Just the home-made line and hook ;  
Just the cool plunge in the brook ;  
Such as these were drink and food,  
In the days of Barefoothood !

Oh, the soft, cool morning dew,  
Ere the days of sock or shoe !  
Oh, the showering, as you pass,  
Of the sparkling spears of grass !  
Miles and miles of cobweb-lace,  
Morning freshness on your face, —  
Who'd forget them, if he could,  
Dear old days of Barefoothood !

## THE BELLS OF LYNN

### THE BELLS OF LYNN

**T**HE night is falling ; the north wind  
blows,  
It bitterly blows over marsh and lea ;  
The fisher's boat tosses, the ebb-tide flows,  
And the curlew tilts in the spume of the  
sea.

But far, and faint, and sweet, and thin,  
Oh, hear the bells from the gray old town,  
The ancient, red-roofed city of Lynn,  
That lies where the winding hills come  
down !

As oft as the bitter winds are blown,  
The smiting winds, from the fields of  
snow,  
So often the bells of Lynn float down  
To the dunes and the desolate wastes  
below.

As oft as the human heart is torn  
By the pain of loss, by the strife with sin,  
So oft are the bells of heaven borne  
O'er the sobbing wastes, like the bells of  
Lynn.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### DOLLY GRAY

'T WAS a winding woodland way  
Where I met you, Dolly Gray,  
And you passed me with a glance  
Of your hazel eyes askance.  
But you never blushed nor turned,  
While the heart within me burned.  
Oh ! you knew not how I yearned,  
Dolly Gray !

Just a year ago to-day,  
Since I met you, Dolly Gray ;  
And the slightest word I speak  
Paints a rose upon your cheek,  
As we wander 'neath the shade  
Of the winding woodland glade.  
What a change a year has made,  
Dolly Gray !

### THE WAKENING

H OW leaps my winter-weary heart to  
see  
The first blush in the maple-tree,  
Or hear, far-off, on some dull, sodden day,  
The robin's hopeful roundelay !

## THE OLD SPINET

No rose that blooms to me so sweetly smells  
As the March odor of the dells,  
The loamy fragrance of the farmer's field,  
By April's alchemy unsealed.

Oh ! it is good to be alive in spring,  
And share the brown earth's wakening ;  
To feel the thrill of primitive delight  
In all that's new-born, fresh, and bright !

## THE OLD SPINET

IT is slim and trim and spare,  
Like the slender Lady Claire  
In the gowns they used to wear,  
Long ago ;  
And it stands there in the gloom  
Of the gabled attic room,  
Like a ghost whose vacant tomb  
None may know.

I can see the lady's hands,  
White as lilies, as she stands  
Strumming fragments of Durand's  
On the keys ;  
And I hear the thin, sweet strain

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Of the Plymouth hymns again,  
Like the sob of windless rain  
In the trees.

She would play the minuet  
For the stately-stepping set,  
While the ardent dancers met,  
Hands and hearts ;  
Did the old-time spinet care,  
If Dan Cupid unaware  
Pricked the breasts of brave and fair  
With his darts ?

Now the spiders with their floss  
Up and down the keyboard cross,  
And the strings are dull as dross,  
Once so bright.  
No one cares to touch the keys, —  
Stain'd old yellow ivories, —  
Save the ghosts some dreamer sees  
In the night.

## DOWN THE LANE

**D**OWN the lane, oh ! down the lane, in  
the days of long ago,  
How the lilacs, white and purple, and the  
hawthorn used to blow ;

## DOWN THE LANE

And the dandelions, hiding in the matted,  
velvet grass,  
Seemed like little pools of sunshine, fit to  
splash in as you pass.

Oh ! the summer morns and evenings, when  
the lazy, lowing cows  
Let you dream your boyish daydreams, while  
they idly stopped to browse.  
What a low, mysterious music in the elm  
trees overhead, —  
Till the oriole translated, and you knew just  
what they said.

Underneath the arch of verdure you could  
see the distant hills,  
And the lake that lapped their bases, and  
the smoking iron-mills ;  
And your dream, perhaps, changed swiftly  
from the bird-song and the sky  
To the money-making city, and the boy of  
by-and-by.

But I know, the whole world over, where-  
soe'er a heart beats true,  
That the man you dreamed of being, always  
dreams of being you.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Oh ! how glad he'd be to empty all his gold-  
bags in the lane,  
If they'd bring the dandelions and the boy-  
heart back again.

### BEFORE THE FLIGHT

**T**OST by the wind on the topmost  
spray,  
Blue of the wing against blue of the sky,  
Poising bird, that could'st spring and fly,  
What to the tree-top holds thee, say,  
Clinging there, while the wind goes by ?

*Very joy of the power of flight,  
Very thrill of the folded wing !  
Now — now — now I will forthward  
spring, —  
Nay, but now ! Oh, the rare delight,  
Just to poise on a spray and sing !*

Sweet withholding of sure and best,  
Pause and sigh ere the spicy draught,  
Full, and utter, and deep, is quaffed, —  
Oh, the joy of it ! have I guessed ?  
Art thou skilled in this subtle craft ?

## DAYBREAK

### A CAPTIVE BIRD

**N**O more to dip and glide  
In the sunlit depths and spaces wide !  
No more on nodding spray  
To toss and sing, all the summer day !

Poor little prisoned thing,  
With skies shut up in thy folded wing,  
Meet is thy broken song —  
How sweet life was, ere it went so wrong !

### DAYBREAK

**D**AYBREAK ! daybreak ! bright grows  
the east at last ;  
Bells ringing, birds singing, sun in the dew-  
drop glassed ;  
Leaves shaking, kine waking, soft sounds  
from field and wood —  
Look up, my weary heart ! morn's here, and  
God is good !

New skies and blue skies — cheer, heart !  
another day  
Lights on the changing world. Up ! strive !  
whilst strive thou may.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

What though the past went wrong? What  
though the night were long?  
Wake, wake, my weary heart! new be thy  
hope and song.

Daybreak! daybreak! Thank God for veil-  
ing night,  
Sleep's sweet forgetfulness, setting the sad  
world right.  
Thank God for birds and bells; "Cheer!  
cheer!" they seem to say.  
"All that is past, is past; life is newborn  
each day."

Sparkle of beamy dew, deep skies so clear  
and blue,  
God smiling on the world, light me to labor  
true!  
Help me to strive with zeal, — strive, though  
my star go down, —  
Sure that, while mornings rise, some day my  
task shall crown.

## BLOSSOMS IN AGE

### TOBOGGANING

**W**ITH tip curled like a withered leaf  
Down sliding when the days are chill,  
My light toboggan skims the snow  
That crusts the forest-bordered hill.

I clutch the rods with mittened hands ;  
I gasp, as from the hilltop bare  
We launch like eagle from a cliff,  
And plunge a thousand feet in air.

But she, my sport-mate, drinks the gale  
In careless, rosy, wild delight.  
To-morrow is her wedding-day,  
And all the world is drest in white !

## BLOSSOMS IN AGE

**Y**ON is an apple-tree,  
Joints all shrunk like an old man's knee,  
Gaping trunk half eaten away,  
Crumbling visibly day by day ;  
Branches dead, or dying fast,  
Topmost limb like a splintered mast.  
Yet behold, in the prime of May,  
How it blooms in the sweet old way !

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Heart of it brave and warm,  
Spite of many a wintry storm,  
Throbbing still with the deep desire,  
Burning still with the eager fire,  
Striving still with the zeal and truth  
Of the gladsome morning days of youth.  
Still to do and to be, forsooth,  
Something worthy of Him whose care  
Summer or winter failed it ne'er ; —  
This is motive for you and me,  
When we grow old like the apple-tree.

## HESTER IN THE GARDEN

**F**FRINGED with stately gentian stalks,  
Cut in strips by narrow walks,  
Mistress Hester's garden lies,  
Prim as Quaker paradise.

Not a blossom pert and gay !  
Sober phlox and caraway,  
Modest violet and pea,  
Keep Miss Hester company.

Morn and eve, in soft gray gown,  
Walks she slowly up and down,  
With her eyes upon the page  
Of some quaint old saint and sage.

## IN TIME OF YOUTH

What a picture (did she know)  
Of the simple Long-ago !  
How her very garments stir  
With the scent of lavender !

## AUTUMN

**T**HE crimson ivy veins the stone  
Of chapel walls, and, sere and brown,  
The leaves along the path are strewn,  
Or through the still air flicker down.

The sky is dim and dreamful soft,  
The hills are gray with veiling haze,  
The scant brook murmurs through the croft,  
And seems to sing of other days.

Good-by, sweet summer ! and good-by,  
My own sad spray and vanished rose.  
I care not now how soon ye lie  
Beneath the soft, forgetful snows.

## IN TIME OF YOUTH

**W**E had God's sunshine for our drink,  
And all the things of earth were sweet.  
The very stars, we used to think,  
Were candles set to light our feet.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

To ramble through the whisp'ring wood,  
To lie in tents of bending grass —  
Oh ! things like these seemed highest good,  
When you and I were lad and lass.

I would the spell were never spent ;  
I would that we were young to-day,  
And through the fields a-singing went,  
To toss and tumble in the hay !

## A SONG OF RAIN

**T**HE cuckoo scurries to and fro ;  
From green to white the maples blow ;  
The longed-for rain is coming !  
Set every tub beneath its spout,  
For there'll be little stirring out,  
When all the roofs are drumming.

Forth creeps the thirsty, wrinkled toad ;  
The dust goes whirling down the road ;  
The slender birches shiver.  
Uncertain little flurries break  
The glassy surface of the lake,  
And scud across the river.

Now darker grows the drifting sky,  
And robin, with a startled cry,  
Wheels round his roofless dwelling.

## INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN

The trees begin to toss and lash ;  
Far off there gleams a forkéd flash,  
Followed by thunder's swelling.

Hark ! 'tis the rustle of the drops  
Among the tossing maple-tops,  
The first cool dash and patter.  
The air grows wondrous soft and sweet  
With smell of woods, and grass, and wheat,  
And marshes all a-spatter.

Now thunders down the mighty flood,  
That makes the road a creek of mud,  
And sets the eaves to spouting.  
Hurrah ! The silver ranks have come,  
With tempest-fife, and thunder-drum,  
And noisy torrents shouting !

## INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN

**I** POUR perpetual cups as sweet  
As nature's heart. Come, maidens, bring  
Your cool brown jars, and fill, and sing.  
Come, lads, your true-loves, haply, meet.  
The world is fair, the light is kind ;  
Forever will I leap, and laugh,  
And kiss the happy lips that quaff,  
And toss my silver on the wind.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### AN AUGUST DRIVE

**D**O you remember, brown eyes, blue eyes,  
The drive we took to Brandon town,  
In the dreamy haze of that August day,  
While the bells of clover beside the way,  
So sweet, so sweet, tossed up and down?  
Do you remember, brown eyes, blue eyes,  
The drive we took to Brandon town?

All about us the air was a-swoon  
With the brimming wine of midsummer  
noon,  
And the August pipers clear and shrill  
Sang *chirr, chirr, chirr*, like a shepherd's  
tune  
On his oaten pipe, from the greenwood hill.  
The sky was soft with a silv'ry mist ;  
The birds in the leafy groves were whist ;  
With glint and gleam ran the winding  
stream ;  
And the woodbine blushed like a maiden  
kist.

Neck to neck ran the shining bays,  
And on we flew by cot and croft ;

## AN AUGUST DRIVE

The hills loomed up through the silver haze ;  
The air blew sweet, and warm, and soft.  
Far blazed the ranks of the golden-rod ;  
The gentian bloomed by the mossy wall ;  
And the daisies, white as the thoughts of  
    God,  
Smiled by the wayside, the fairest of all.

Do you remember the river-road,  
O'er-arched with elms, where the silent tide  
Went shining and slipping along beside  
The banks of fern, and the lilies wide,  
Like golden cups, in the water glowed ?  
Oh, there we sang to the lilting string,  
To the river's sweep, and the elm-trees'  
    swing.

In and out, by nook and bend,  
We swiftly whirled, till the steepled town  
Out of its hillside grove looked down,  
And our drive to Brandon was at an end.

But oft as midsummer comes again,  
With its wealth of purple and white and  
    gold,  
Its roadside splendors, its ripening grain,  
And odors drifting from field and wold,  
I shall think of that drive to Brandon town,

## THE HEART OF LIFE

With the eyes of blue and the eyes of  
brown ;  
For love's sweet longing forever haunts,  
And the wine of life is a maiden's glance.

## A SONG OF AUTUMN

**H**O for the bending sheaves,  
Ho for the crimson leaves  
Flaming in splendor !  
Season of ripened gold,  
Plenty in crib and fold,  
Skies with a depth untold,  
Liquid and tender.

Far, like the smile of God,  
See how the golden-rod  
Ripples and tosses !  
Yonder, a crimson vine  
Trails from a bearded pine,  
Thin as a thread of wine  
Staining the mosses.

Bright 'neath the morning blue  
Sparkles the frosted dew,  
Gem-like and starry.  
Hark how the partridge cock

## THE FOUNTAIN IN THE RAIN

Pipes to his scattered flock,  
Mindful how swift the hawk  
Darts on his quarry !

Autumn is here again —  
Banners on hill and plain  
Blazing and flying.  
Hail to the amber morn,  
Hail to the heaped-up corn,  
Hail to the hunter's horn,  
Swelling and dying !

## THE FOUNTAIN IN THE RAIN

**I**N the rain  
The silver fountain leaps,  
And scatters its drops like grain.

Why does the fountain play  
In the throbbing flood of the mighty rain,  
Beating the plain ?  
Why does the fountain try  
To equal the sky,  
While the storm impetuous sweeps,  
And the earth is full of the mighty deeps ?

Tell me, why does the soul  
Hope and strive evermore,

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Baffled, out-done, forgotten, full  
Of the pangs and failures of yore?  
Tell me why unto God  
It lifts up its face again,  
Lifts up the hands that failed in the strife,  
Lifts up the faded garlands of life,  
Kisses the rod,  
Welcomes the pain,  
And is fain,  
Though all its dreaming is o'er?

So shall I answer thee  
Why the fountain leaps in the rain,  
Though the earth is full of the sea.

# WITH MEN AND WOMEN



## THE WAY OF LOVE

### I

**T**O one came woman's love unsought, —  
The captive eye, the tender thought,  
The cheek by tyrant blushes caught.

As surely, sweetly, as the rose  
Lifts up its face and sunward blows,  
To him did beauty's heart uncloze.

Oh, his to love by royal right !  
Oh, his, of all earth's maidens white,  
To choose the priestess of delight !

What did he with love's magic rod ?  
He smote the sweetest flower of God,  
And in the mire its whiteness trod.

### II

The other had no outward grace ;  
He lacked the charm of form and face  
Which youth and beauty love to trace.

But, oh ! throughout him, swift and sweet,  
To very tips of hands and feet,  
Great heart of troth and yearning beat.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Divine the hunger of his eye.

“O God ! to love before one die !”

Sad prayer, that never knew reply.

Oh, strange, strange, strange ! — yet why  
arraign ?

All wonders else in earth explain,

But set no laws to love's rare pain.

## THE PILGRIM'S SONG

**I** MET a pilgrim on the way,  
And thus I heard him sing, and say :

“No life without its joy and pain,

No day without its sun and rain,

No deed without its loss and gain ;

So let's be happy while we may, —

Sing hey !”

This was the burden of his lay.

“But there's a difference, be sure,”

I cried, “between the rich and poor !”

The pilgrim smiled, and thus he spake :

“What toils and cares do riches make,

And then what sudden wings they take !

Nay, gold is but a shining lure, —

Sing hey !”

This was the burden of his lay.

## WITH A CALENDAR

“And yet,” quoth I, “of grief and care,  
Some folk a double portion bear.”

“Then also double joy!” cried he;

“For when their burdens drop, you see,  
They go so wondrous light and free,  
It seems like walking on the air, —

Sing hey!”

Still was the burden of his lay.

## WITH A CALENDAR

**L**O! these unrisen days,  
What shall they bring to thee, to me?  
God grant, the joy of kindred ways,  
The love that binds and yet makes free,  
The piety that toils and prays.

O God! for this New Year  
Of sweet, new hope we thank Thee.    Make  
Our path of love and duty clear.  
Watch o'er us, sleeping or awake,  
And draw our hearts to Thine more near.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### THE SONG OF THE MARKET- PLACE

**G**AY was the throng that poured through  
the streets of the old French town ;  
The walls with bunting streamed, and the  
flags tossed up and down.

“*Vive l’roi ! Vive l’roi !*” — the shout of  
the people rent the air,  
And the cannon shook and roared, and the  
bells were all a-blare.

But, crouched by St. Peter’s fount, a beggar  
with her child,

Weary, and faint, and starved, with eyes  
that were sad and wild,

Gazed on the passing crowd, and cried, as  
it went and came —

“Alms, for the love of God ! Pity, in  
Jesu’s name !”

Few were the coins that fell in the little cup  
she bore,

But she looked at her starving babe, and  
cried from her heart the more —

“Alms, for the love of God ! Mother of  
Jesu, hear !”

## SONG OF THE MARKET-PLACE

The steeples shook with bells, and the  
prayer was drowned in a cheer.

But see ! through the thoughtless crowd  
comes one with a regal face,  
He catches the beggar's prayer, and turns  
with a gentle grace ;

“ Alms thou shalt have, poor soul ! — Alas,  
not a sou to share !

But stay ! ” And he doffs his hat and  
stands in the crowded square.

Then from his heart he sang a little song of  
the south,

A far-off cradle song, that fell from his  
mother's mouth ;

And the din was hushed in the square, and  
the people stood as mute

As the beasts in the Thracian wood, when  
Orpheus touched his lute.

The melting tenor ceased, and a sob from  
the list'ners came.

“ Mario ! ” cried a voice, and the throng  
caught up the name.

“ Mario ! ” and the coins rained like a  
shower of gold,

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Till the singer's hat o'erflowed like Midas'  
  chests of old.

“Sister,” he said, and turned to the beggar  
  crouching there,  
“Take it; the gold is thine; Jesu hath  
  heard thy prayer;”  
Then kissed the white-faced child, and  
  smiling went his way,  
Gladdened with loving thoughts and the joy  
  of holiday.

That night, when the footlights shone on the  
  famous tenor's face,  
And he bowed to the splendid throng with  
  his wonted princely grace,  
Cheer after cheer went up, and, stormed at  
  with flowers, he stood  
Like a dark and noble pine, when the blos-  
  soms blow through the wood.

Wilder the tumult grew, till out of his fine  
  despair  
The thought of the beggar rose, and the  
  song he had sung in the square.  
Raising his hand, he smiled, and a silence  
  filled the place,

## A CHILD'S THOUGHT

While he sang that simple air, with the love-  
light on his face.

Wet were the singer's cheeks, when the last  
note died away ;  
Brightest of all his bays, the wreath that he  
won that day !  
Sung for the love of God, sung for sweet  
pity's sake,  
Song of the market-place, tribute of laurel  
take.

## A CHILD'S THOUGHT

**O** LARGE, perplexéd eyes !  
What thought within you lies  
Beyond all reach ?  
Some truth in heaven heard,  
That finds on earth no word  
Can give it speech ?

I question, — but in vain !  
The child's a child again,  
On toys intent.  
Back from the mystic land,  
He cannot understand  
The thing I meant.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

And yet — and yet I know  
There flashes to and fro  
    Across his soul  
Some thought, whereto he heeds ;  
And carts and wooden steeds  
    Forget to roll.

## THE MEASURE OF LIFE

**T**EN years a gracious Heaven gives  
To make man conscious that he lives.

Then twenty years of ardors sweet,  
And hopes that dance with wingéd feet.

Another score to strive and weep,  
And bind youth's dreams with gyves of sleep.

And last the harvest-twenty come.  
Reap, bind, and take the pathway home.

## REALIZATION

**S**OMETIMES there comes a taste sur-  
passing sweet  
Of common things, — the very breath I  
take ;

## THE DOWAGER

A draught from some cool spring amid the  
brake ;  
The wheaten crust that I in hunger eat.

So I have thought that heaven, perhaps, is  
just  
The uttermost perception of all good,  
The spiritual rapture of this zest, refined ;  
An exquisite new taste of friendship, food,  
The joys of love, the odors in the wind,  
And all that now seems deadened by our  
dust.

## LOVE'S MEASURING

**I** SAID in my doubting heart,  
“ Our lives are set oceans apart.”

Then Love took his measuring-wand,  
And lo ! neither sea was nor land !

## THE DOWAGER

**G**IRLS about her in a flock,  
Like roses round a hollyhock ;  
Laughter, motion, gliding grace,  
Youth's fresh lustre in a face,  
All the things that sweetest were —  
Yonder sits the dowager.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Bravely still she smiles, indeed ;  
Placid in her cap and weed,  
Plies the lorgnette left and right  
With a hand still lily-white.  
Ah ! but the pinch'd heart of her —  
Poor old wistful dowager !

Once for her the starry lights  
And the waltzes' birdlike flights ;  
Once a bosom all a-throb,  
Sigh of rapture like a sob ;  
Wafts of violet and myrrh —  
Poor old dreaming dowager !

Snow-whirl of white drapery,  
Laces like the wind-whipt sea,  
Feet that mocked the swallow's wing,  
Ever lightly vanishing ;  
Heart and soul with joy astir —  
Such was once the dowager.

Now she fain remembers all  
While the waltzes rise and fall,  
And the subtle, soft perfume  
Hovers ghostlike in the room.  
Perished hopes and fancies stir —  
Poor old wrinkled dowager !

## THE CRY OF HUMANITY

Better would she be, I trow,  
Where the quiet hearth-coals glow,  
And the seer's lofty page  
Rears a temple fit for age.  
Nay? — her moon-dead youth for her?  
Frivolous old dowager!

## THE CRY OF HUMANITY

### I

“**H**ARK! — heard you wailing of  
voices,

Yonder, far off, in the night?”

“Nay, 'twas the wind hoarsely shouting,  
Tossing the pines on the height.”

“Stay — I hear treble of children,  
Tremulous, piercing with pain.”

“Peace! 'tis the tribe of the marshes,  
Pleading with heaven for rain.”

“Nay — but list! women are sobbing,  
Beating their breasts as they moan.”

“Hush! 'tis the lake in the valley,  
Pulsing on shingle and stone.”

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### II

Deep in the soul of the list'ner  
Voices are murmuring still, —  
Neither the waves', nor the marshes',  
Nor the wild wind's on the hill.

Deeper his spirit is harking ;  
Under the symbol and sign,  
Hears he the meaning that shapes it, —  
Thy pleading, brother, and mine !

Up from the world, blindly spinning,  
Rises humanity's cry.  
Nature but echoes it dumbly —  
Hear it, O Father on high !

### THE FIGURE-HEAD

**S**PHINX-LIKE, she tow'rs above the  
pier  
In this storm-sheltered busy stead,  
With face so stern and cameo-clear —  
The carven lady figure-head.

The sea is crusted on her hair ;  
The waves have stained her brow and  
breast ;

## AN OLD VIOLIN

Her eyes — the storm and night are there,  
Defiance, and a wild unrest.

Forthward she leans, as if to breast  
The howling tempest, surge, and sleet ;  
Her wonted path the midnight wave,  
That breaks in fire about her feet.

What awful depths her eyes have seen,  
And lurking monsters of the vast ;  
What death's-hair in the waters green,  
And pale, drowned faces floating past !

Alien to her this slimy quay,  
The reeking harbor dead and gray.  
Oh for the broad blue sky and sea,  
The glory of the flying spray !

## AN OLD VIOLIN

**B**EHOLD this rare Cremona ! Master  
it,  
'Twill sing you pure as angels. But to  
hands  
Unskilled, 'tis but for mantel-rubbish fit ;  
Old, worth so much ; — one reads, and  
understands !

## THE HEART OF LIFE

'Twas wont to shake men's hearts, as when  
the wind

Sets all the leaves a-quiver. Now it lies  
With all its sweet soul laid and undivined ;  
Priced at so much ; — a soul for sale !  
Who buys ?

One says 'tis scratched and ugly, gumm'd  
and stained ;

He can buy handsomer for less. No  
doubt !

Another spies a crack, or real, or feigned ;  
A third notes fraud, — is pleased to point  
it out.

Ah, well ! endure, thou master's child !  
Ev'n so

Are noble spirits carped at, all unknown,  
While in their hearts divinely swell and flow  
Those harmonies that genius hears alone.

## THE TWELFTH GATE

**H** EAVEN has twelve gates. I may not  
enter where

The white-robed victors march from cross  
and pyre,

Nor yet with those in spotless pure attire,

## THE ESSENTIAL THING

Who caught no taint from earth's sin-laden  
air.

I may not come with those who bravely bare  
The crucifixion of their life's desire,  
Or carried all their days embosomed fire,  
Or battled with a black and fierce despair.

Nor great, nor noble, nor enduring, I —  
No martyr, soldier, or enthusiast,  
But one whose life, in peaceful habit fast,  
Reflects God's love as lakes reflect the sky.  
O God ! may I behold thy face at last,  
Among thy children who lived duteously.

## THE ESSENTIAL THING

**A**LL the world's writing, sure, is but a  
glass  
Wherein each mortal sees himself; and  
though  
Before ten thousand books my spirit pass,  
Not one shall change me from the thing I  
know.

Yet in the great I Am both thou and I,  
Thinking diversely as the sunbeams  
shine,

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Find our eternal, perfect harmony,  
One pattern evermore of truth divine.

Therefore I preach a simple faith, and say,  
Cover with love our widest variance.  
Let him believe, whose idol is of clay.  
All else is only mode and circumstance.

## A CHILD OF TO-DAY

**O** CHILD, had I thy lease of time !  
Such unimagined things  
Are waiting for that soul of thine to spread  
its untried wings !

Shalt thou not speak the stars, and go on  
journeys thro' the sky ?  
And read the soul of man as clear as now  
we read the eye ?

Who knows if science may not find some  
art to make thee new —  
To mend the garments of thy flesh when  
thou hast worn them through ?

'Tis fearful, aye, and beautiful, thy future  
that may be.

How strange ! — perhaps death's conqueror  
sits smiling on my knee !

## THE NIGHT-WATCHMAN

### TRUTH

I'D rather be a violet, and be blue,  
Than be a man, and to myself untrue.

## THE NIGHT-WATCHMAN

EACH night I ten times pace my wonted  
round,

To see that all is well. At first the air  
Stirs with the throb of life ; then, here and  
there,

The cheery lights die out ; without a sound,  
The little city sleeps from bound to bound.

I, I alone, my glancing lantern bear,  
And watch the clouds that stream like hoary  
hair

Across the stars, and walk my plot of  
ground.

Now, just before the dawn, strange throbs of  
white

Beat upward to the zenith, and the sky  
Expands and quivers. Then with awe I feel  
The moving of God's presence in the night ;  
And all the stars like spirits seem to wheel  
Above me in the spaces black and high.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### SMITING THE ROCK

**S**HALT *thou* not smite the desert rock  
too ?

Yea, if thou wilt — if thou smite the rock  
through !

Let then the miracle pass at its worth :  
Legend or gospel, what matters ? The earth  
Hath its sweet waters deep down. If the rod  
Or the bar bring it up, what matters with  
God ?

Art thou not prophet nor leader ? What  
then ?

Smite ! Become prophet ! Thus God exalts  
men.

Smite first, strive first ; let us see what avails.  
'T is trying succeeds, 'tis refusal that fails.

Delve down, if thou must, through the flint-  
iest stuff.

So the water springs forth, thou art prophet  
enough !

### THE DEAD BRAVE

**B**OW and arrows by his side,  
Soft and tawny panther's hide,  
Food for journey to the bound

## USE

Of the Happy Hunting Ground,  
So they laid him in his grave,  
Stern, bronze, silent Indian brave.

Many a winter spread its tent,  
Many a summer came and went.  
Higher than the squirrel's home  
Rose the gleaming spire and dome.  
And above those savage bones  
Modern men heaped costly stones.

Then the fire-fiend had his way.  
And ('twas only yesterday),  
Delving at the ruin's heart,  
Back I saw the workmen start,  
As the sleeping warrior's dust  
Crumbled at the mattock's thrust !

## USE

**H**ERE in the world is a place  
For everything God has wrought,  
From the flower, with its wee white face,  
To the soul that can think God's thought.

No bird, with its callow breast,  
Is loosed from the shell it wore,

## THE HEART OF LIFE

But finds in the sheltering nest  
God's thought of it, long before.

And I, — of so little worth  
That I seem like a barren vine, —  
Shall I think that in all the earth  
No place and no use are mine ?

Nay, nay ! Let the blade of grain —  
One more in the crowded sod,  
Yet nourished by sun and rain —  
Speak a truer thought of God.

## THE WIND'S WAY

**T**HE wind of God swept through a garden fair,  
And stript the queenly rose of half its leaves.

The rose of roses and the gardener's care  
The wind of God made bare,  
And all the garden grieves.

O wind ! why didst thou pass the pale wild  
rose,  
That swings and suns against the outer  
wall,

## CAN I FORGET

To take the fairest of the flowery close,  
The sweetest bud that blows,  
The rose beloved of all ?

Alas ! the wind's way is a strange, wild way,  
And whence, or why, or whither, who can  
know ?

Unseen, it wanders forth both night and day,  
And who shall bid it stay,  
That God has bidden blow ?

## CAN I FORGET ?

**C**AN I forget ? The moon was forest-  
high,

And made a golden path above the trees.  
We sat us down, and there was no sound nigh,  
Except the breeze.

And so we bode in silence, inly yearning ;  
For neither knew, nor dared love's knowl-  
edge yet ;

But ever unto thine my face was turning —  
Can I forget ?

Can I forget ? Ah, Love, 'twas but a word  
About some trivial thing that broke the  
spell ;

## THE HEART OF LIFE

But what thou saidst, Sweetheart, and what  
I heard,

I may not tell.

I only know that on my bosom sinking,  
I feel that sudden, fragrant burden yet,  
And of thy lips my lips are madly drinking —  
Can I forget ?

## THE BROKEN CHARGE

**W**ould you hear of the bravest, coolest  
deed

Was ever inspired by a nation's need ?

Thomas McBurney — Kansas-bred Scot —  
Lay in his rifle-pit, waiting a shot.

Over him whistled the enemy's balls,  
*Ping* — and they sank in the fortress walls.

Suddenly out of the woods there broke  
A line of cavalry, gray as smoke.

A troop — a regiment — a brigade !  
God ! what a rush and a roar they made !

A wild, swift charge on the frail redoubt,  
Carbines ready and sabres out.

## THE BROKEN CHARGE

Hither and thither, like frightened hares,  
Fled the sharpshooters out of their lairs.

All save Thomas McBurney. He  
Thought not first what *his* fate might be.

Uppermost thought in his hero-soul,  
To save the fortress clean and whole !

On they thundered, the cavalcade.  
McBurney waited ; his plan was made.

Fifty yards from his cairn of rocks —  
Up he rose, like a Jack-in-the-box.

*Bang!* — and the leader's horse went down,  
Neck outstretched in the wire-grass brown.

Over him tumbled a dozen more ;  
And the colonel — his heart and his head  
were sore !

“ Halt ! ” he cried ; and the broken line  
Stopt, strung out like a trailing vine.

Lo ! in the valley's dim expanse,  
Tossing flags and bayonets' glance !

## THE HEART OF LIFE

Reinforcements ! At double quick  
They cross the meadows and ford the creek :

Boys in blue, with their banners bright —  
Just in season to turn the fight.

Thomas McBurney, as cool as you please,  
Settled down on his dust-grimed knees.

To pray ? Yes, thankfully ! and to run  
A well-greased cartridge into his gun.

## PEACE

THE golden age of peace has come on  
earth !

Lo, in the blood-stained fields the lilies  
bloom,

And softly on the alien soldier's tomb  
Is laid the wreath that owns his manly worth.  
No more, thank God ! the cannon thunders  
forth,

Or sabre flashes in the smoke and gloom.

Peace, Peace ! — for snowy-mantled Peace  
make room,

And Love, that in the heart of God had  
birth.

## NEARER AND DEARER

Henceforth let children on the bastions play,  
And wild-flowers blossom in the cannon's  
throat.

Let every banner over brothers float ;  
Let bitter memories be washed away.  
Rise, Star of Love, on every land to-day,  
And bugles blow the sweet evangel note !

## NEARER AND DEARER

**N**EARER and dearer are the blessed  
dead

Than we are wont to think,  
When with farewells and tears we bow the  
head

Beside that solemn brink.

Tell me, thou child of grief — canst thou  
not see

With clearer eyes than then ?

Tell me if love — thy love — can ever be  
A thing of earth again ?

O eyes that God hath cleansed with sacred  
tears ;

O hearts by sorrow tuned !

Ye see and love as never all those years,  
While ye with flesh communed.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

And are they not then nearer, whom we see  
With eyes no longer blind ?  
And is not love the sweeter, if it be  
Of an immortal kind ?

Oh, comforting, sweet thought — that though  
we stand  
On death-divided shores,  
Love still can stretch to us its angel hand,  
And lay its heart on ours !

## THE CHILD'S TREASURE

**L**ITTLE child at play,  
Sell me your To-day !  
I will give you gold —  
More than you can hold ;  
Ships with silken sails,  
Steeds with ribbon'd tails,  
Dolls with eyes of blue,  
Limpid as the dew ;  
Lambs on painted wheels,  
To trundle at your heels ;  
Blocks for houses tall,  
Hoop, and kite, and ball,  
And a magic silver top  
That will spin and never stop !

## CRISIS

Will you do it ? “ Yea ! ”  
Cries the child at play.  
Oh ! if you but knew,  
Eager eyes of blue,  
What a gift divine  
You'd exchange for mine !  
Keep it — it is worth  
More than all the earth !

## CRISIS

**A**S when some watcher of the skies,  
Whom many sleepless nights have  
worn,

Falls prone upon his bench, and lies  
Outstretched, by slumber overborne ;

Meanwhile some splendid argent mass,  
For ages out of mortal ken,  
Moves slowly o'er his object-glass,  
And fades away in space again :

So come the crises of our lives  
When least foreseen. In sleep we lie  
What time the pregnant star arrives  
That makes, or mars, our destiny.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### THE TWO FLOWERS

**T**HERE grow in the garden of life  
Two flowers, our souls to prove —  
The passionate rose of Self,  
And the spotless lily of Love.

We never can have them both ;  
One flower for each of us blows.  
We choose the lily for aye,  
Or forever we choose the rose.

### THE UNIVERSAL LOVE

**W**ERE man's soul an outcast thing, —  
Every thought a raven wing  
Resting not on roof or hill, —  
Love would overtake it still.

For I know one strong desire  
Binds the stars in chains of fire,  
Thrills this universal frame  
With the magic of its name :

Love ! Who journeys to the shore  
Where its power is felt no more ?  
Hell, though it were walled with brass,  
Lifts its gates to let Love pass.

## IN MEMORIAM

### A THOUGHT OF HEAVEN

**O**F all the thoughts of heaven the sweetest this, I say —

To have sometime, somewhere, the things  
on earth foregone,  
The precious gifts of God we blindly put  
away,  
The days whose fleeting light was wasted  
at the dawn.

The things we might have done, to do,  
sometime, somewhere,  
Our best, our truest selves in that new  
life to be —  
Oh ! that were sweetest heav'n, I think, or  
here, or there,  
Enough for sons of God, enough for you  
and me !

## IN MEMORIAM

**S**HE was too good for chiselled praise,  
That time o'erspreads with moss.  
On stone as spotless as her days  
Carve but the holy cross.

## THE HEART OF LIFE

### THE TRIBUTE OF SILENCE

A POET read his verses, and of two  
Who listened, one spake naught but  
open praise ;

The other held his peace, but all his face  
Was brightened by the inner joy he knew.

Two friends, long absent, met ; and one  
had borne

The awful stroke and scathe of blind-  
ing loss.

Hand fell in hand ; so knit they like  
a cross ;

With no word uttered, heart to heart was  
sworn.

A mother looked into her baby's eyes,  
As blue as heav'n and deep as nether sea.  
By what dim prescience, spirit-wise,  
knew she

Such soul's exchanges never more would rise ?

Oh deep is silence — deep as human souls,  
Aye, deep as life, beyond all lead and  
line ;

And words are but the broken shells  
that shine

Along the shore by which the ocean rolls.

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